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BOOK REVIEWS.

RECENT SPANISH LITERATURE.

Cuentos Castellanos. Selected and edited, with Notes and Vocabulary, by MAY D. CARTER AND CATHARINE MALLOY. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Pp. i-vi + 1-126 (text), 129-200 (notes and vocabulary).

TEACHERS of Spanish among us will welcome a good collection of Spanish stories adapted to early reading. One or more are promised us, but none has yet appeared quite up to the desired standard. The present one is exceptionally weak in making good any claims to merit, or any legitimate reason for its appearance.

It comprises eight selections, of which half are of trifling value, being virtually without interest and without profit. Of those that are left the longest is Valera's well-known fairy tale, *El Pájaro Verde*. This at least has the virtue of movement and of a fine literary style, even though its vogue as a Spanish theme be much overdone among us. We do not think its merit high enough to warrant the frequent reduplication to which it has been subjected among us, since it has little in it that may be considered intrinsically Spanish. The last selection—and one of the longest in the series—is a specimen from Castelar dealing with the perennial subject of bull-fighting (*Una Corrida de Toros*), which ends in an insipid love-story that awkwardly articulates with the main narrative. The literature of tauromachy is ill adapted to any grade of reading unless supplied with clear and abundant editorial explanation of the numerous technical terms involved—a desideratum that is far from being realized in the present case. The only numbers in the series free from some well-founded objections are the third, ¡*Adiós, Cordera!* a touching story by Leopoldo Alas; and the seventh, *El Talismán*, a readable story by Señora Pardo Bazán. To these, the *Pájaro Verde* might be thrown in to fill out. From this summary it will be seen that after the examiner has reconstituted the table of contents—with which the book is not provided—he will find little to repay him for his analysis thereof.

The editorial workmanship is of a correspondingly low level. The register of all the sins of omission and commission would be a long and tedious one. The vocabulary in particular abounds in omissions and inaccuracies, upward of a hundred of these having been noted after only a cursory inspection of the text. The notes fall into the well-worn vice of telling us what we already know, and discreetly gliding in silence over what we do not know and are in urgent need of knowing. But the most serious blemish in the book, and one rarely committed by modern-language editors, is the lack of proper care in freeing the text from objectionable passages and expressions. Not that we affect any excessive punctiliousness on this score. But it is obvious to all that some things which may be freely allowed in good literature are not to be tolerated in an elementary language text destined for *intensive* study, in which every sentence and every word are liable to rigid analysis. The present editors have been strangely remiss in this respect, leaving in the text matter that, in the writer's own personal experience, can cause only embarrassment and discomfort to both learner and teacher.

The book is an undesirable publication. Many of the mere errors referred to can, and doubtless will, be corrected by the publishers. But it is doubtful whether the book will come out of any such revision with its character substantially improved. Its harmfulness exceeds the mere negative one of not possessing the qualifications necessary in a useful instrument of instruction. It has a far-reaching positive one: it cannot but prejudice beginners against Spanish letters, if—as they will naturally assume—these are to be judged as a whole by the representative selections before them in the present collection.

R. E. BASSETT.

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS.

Elements of Political Economy. By J. SHIELD NICHOLSON. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1903. Pp. xvii+538.

It has long been the hope of those familiar with Professor Nicholson's larger work on the *Principles of Political Economy*, the three volumes of which were published at intervals during the last decade, that the author would some time write a briefer and more elementary treatise on the same subject. That hope has been fulfilled with the publication of the present volume, and the *Elements*, while much too difficult a text-book for secondary schools, will be favorably received by those who have not yet found a satisfactory text to use in college courses in elementary economics. The book certainly compares favorably with those that are now used in our American colleges—Laughlin's *Mill*, Bullock's *Introduction*, Davenport's *Outlines*, Hadley's *Economics*, and Walker's *Advanced Course*. It is more modern in spirit and in doctrine than Mill, and more difficult and therefore more adequate than Walker. It is, however, in just these ways that the *Elements* is itself inferior to Professor Seager's new *Introduction to Economics*, published more recently by the same firm. But for English students Professor Nicholson's work will be especially valuable because of its references to English economic history and English economic conditions.

The *Elements* is not a mere abstract of the author's larger work, but it follows the same general plan and method of treatment, and differs more because of omissions than from any radical alterations in the text. Professor Nicholson still follows Mill, as he did in the *Principles*—a fact that favorably commends the book to those who believe that the student's best introduction to economics is from the classical point of view. In the present volume there are the thoroughness of exposition and the logical arrangement that make Mill so valuable for disciplinary purposes, and, combined with these, the changes and additions needed to put the student in touch with the more recent development of the science. To see how true this is, one has only to read, for example, the chapter on "The Quantity Theory of Money," or any chapter of the book on "Distribution," and he will find that Professor Nicholson has thoroughly modernized the classical treatment of the subject, and at the same time refrained from adopting any radical or not generally accepted doctrines, such as the assimilation of land to capital. The new analysis of "Profits and Labor Cost" is especially valuable to one who wishes to teach a modernized classical theory of economics.

There are those who will regret Professor Nicholson's evident unwillingness to discard the old divisions of the subject; for we still have five books, dealing, in this case, with "Production and Consumption," "Distribution," "Exchange," "Economic Progress," and the "Economic Functions of Society." The question might be raised